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CENTURY AND THE SCHOOL,

LECTURE

READ BEFORE THE NATIONAL EDUCATIONAL ASSOCIATION,
AT ATLANTA, GA.,

—BY—

F. LOUIS SOLDAN,

Principal Normal School of St. Louis, Mo.

SALEM, OHIO:
OFFICE OF OHIO EDUCATIONAL MONTHLY.
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THE CENTURY AND THE SCHOOL.

We are told by philologists that our forefathers in making the myths which we find in their poetry and legends were wiser than they knew. In these myths modern philology has discovered wonderful truths. It professes to know more about Apollo than the Greeks, more about Jupiter than the Romans, and more about Thor than the Saxons of the North. When it is thus the practice to invest ancient myths with modern meaning, we may be allowed to select one of these myths for the purpose of this paper, and try to find in ancient lore the foreshadowing of a modern view.

There is no story more prevalent in northern mythology, than that of little beings, gifted with extraordinary powers. In the tales of Scotland and of old England the little Brownies play an important part. They sweep the floor which the servant has neglected, they do the work which the lazy mortal has forgotten to do. They are the working spirits, the little active principles. So in the mythology of the Norse peoples, the giants and Gods, powerful in stature and deeds, seem in reality dependent for their weapons, armor, and all their worldly goods upon the diligence of those little dwarfs, who are the types of wisdom and industry. To their skill the gods and giants owe the arms by which alone they retain power and sway. And yet these little beings live removed from the eyes of the world and from the light of day. In modest retirement they are the guardians of the highest treasures of mountain and mine. In the darkness of the caverns they toiled and labored, they ply the hammer and make for Odin the never-missing spear, for Thor the terrible hammer, they build for Freya the free ship, and they weave the golden hair of the goddess of the earth.

If we are allowed to carry into this story an explanation of our own, it seems as if the ancient myth foreshadowed a discovery of our century, namely, the truth that the events of nature and of the world are not brought about by Titanic revolutions, but are the result of the silent and persistent forces which work quietly and unobservedly in every atom and cell. Apparently insignificant processes which surround us everywhere and at every moment, are sufficient to account for all the changes in nature. The little forces shape the world, and not the gigantic revolutions of which former theories spoke.

This recognition of the power of the silent and little forces of nature, which work out of sight, in the depths of the world, is the view peculiar to the science of our century. Our century has discovered these little powers and observed their work in nature. While former theories saw in the surface of the earth the result of great revolutions and sudden upheavals, the science of our century has found that all these forms of geological life are due to the steady work of forces which surround us

and which we can observe in their activity every moment. It is the little and insignificant cause which creates and sustains the great and gigantic phenomenon. Before the examining glance of science, whatever is great dissolves itself, and appears to be the work of what seems small and powerless. Those bold cliffs and mountains which protect the South of England against the fury of the sea, appear to the inquisitive eye as untold myriads of little shells which in slow accumulation have formed mountains. Society too has its little powers which, compared with the gigantic interests of modern times, with politics, commerce, and the wheel-works of manufacture and transit and trade, appear insignificant and small, but which nevertheless in modest retirement drive the wheels and move the loom of time. Among these small powers, in which our century has recognized a creative and preservative power which supports the State and sustains social life, there is none humbler but at the same time more significant than the school. Like those little mythical beings of the old Norse story who wrought the arms by which the giants of the world maintained their sway, the school creates for the State the arms against barbarism and crime, the school in the opinion of our century, builds the throne on which liberty can safely rest, it covers the earth with the golden harvest of the peaceful arts. Like the Brownies of northern mythology who were the guardians of great treasures, education and the school are the guardians of the great treasures of humanity, of knowledge, morality, and law.

According to the view which our century takes of education, the school should not only be the guardian of the ethical treasures of mankind, but also the servant of the aims and the objects of the times.

All callings have a narrowing influence on those that follow them, and the teacher is not free from the narrowing influence of his humble vocation. "In narrow work the mind itself grows narrow" is a true saying. Too easily we cling to what is traditional and old and a time-honored custom, and it is sometimes necessary to remind ourselves of the old saying of the Roman teacher: "Do not educate the child for the school but for life!" It is a just demand that the school should move along with the progressive movement of society at large. Thus it appears that the school should be guided by the wants of society; but the features of society change more quickly than the waves of the river, and never more than in this age of quick growth and quick decay. The work of adapting the school to the changing demands of the times is not an easy one. But that system of schools which does not move and develop with the motion of the times, is not carried along on the fresh wave of public opinion, and loses its place in the sympathies of the people. To keep pace with the development of society and science, to assimilate what is new, without discarding what is good in things traditional and time-honored, to appreciate new demands and new interests without injustice to what is old and tried, this is the task of that education which means to be what it ought to be, namely, the true servant of the noblest aims of our century. The pupil shall enter life not with his face turned backward, like one who has been trained in the lore of the past only, not like a wanderer in the bewildering mazes of an unintelligible, unknown world,

but rather as a new reaper steps into the field to engage in work for which his education has endowed him with taste and ability. Thus, growing upon the fresh soil of the century the school sends thousands of strong roots into the life of the nation and sucks new power out of the throbbing heart of the century. Those epochs in education are the greatest, in which the school has been roused from dreams of the past, and linked afresh to the bright life of the present. The glorious rise of the school during the time of the reformation, began with the moment that Latin was displaced from its universal position in all the schools, and the vernacular was taught to the people to enable them to read the newly-translated Bible. What seemed to many the ruin or the giving up of the characteristic task, the teaching of Latin, was in reality the beginning of the modern era in education, during which schools have grown so wonderfully that no mediæval mind could conceive of such a growth, and no historical parallel can be found.

The next powerful impulse was given to the school by Bacon when he confronted the humanistic book-wisdom, and the Aristotelian authority by emphasizing the neglected study of nature. With the moment that Pestalozzi's spirit conceived the idea of educating the masses, an idea ignored by Locke as well as by Rousseau, with the moment that Pestalozzi wedded the school to the life of the nation, in which we live at present, the new era in education began. The school of our days will not lose anything by embracing fully and unreservedly the spirit of our century. The influence of the school is powerful and stirring in proportion as it conceives and recognizes the noblest aims and endeavors of the century and tries to teach in accordance with them. Not only usage and traditional methods, but also reason and progress should regulate school institutions.

"Custom calls me to it—
"What custom wills, in all things should we do it,
"The dust of antique time would lie unswept,
"And mountainous error be too highly heaped
"For truth to overpeer.

Thus then, our century demands that the school be the guardian of the best aspirations of the times, but it should also be the servant of those interests which do not belong to any particular time, but to all times namely, the general ethical interests of humanity.

Our century deserves that the school be subservient to it, for no other age has, even approximately, recognized the value of education as much as the present, or expressed its appreciation in such an active way, by the establishment and support of the most wonderful educational systems.

"He who controls the education of a nation"—says Leibnitz, "controls its future." The assurance of the duration and perpetuity of free institutions, lies in the possibility of educating a nation so as to make the masses with whom ultimately the government of a country rests, intelligent and responsible rulers in their own affairs.

There is probably no other institution which has been made so extensively the subject of attacks and abuse, as the school. It has been

blamed for educating too much and for educating too little. It has been censured on account of not doing enough to prevent crime and criticized for not doing enough to produce wealth. It has been arraigned as an enemy of physical health of youth. Every class of specialists has demanded that the school should do something for the promotion of its art, and has denounced it for not doing enough. In all these things it is evident that much is expected from the school. But even in the unreasonable demands made upon it, there is an element not entirely unsatisfactory to the friends of education, namely, that all these demands imply an almost boundless confidence in the power of education. It is reasonable to suppose that the school can do much, but it is foolish to imagine that it can do everything. The century has great faith in the efficiency and power of the school. In all the evils which beset the body politic, the school is expected to furnish some remedy which will cure or prevent them.

This belief is characteristic of the century, and we do not find fault with it, even when it speaks in exaggeration of what the school can do for the state, and when it forgets that there are many educational factors besides the school, that life, family, civil vocations, the press, the pulpit are just as important and responsible factors in education as the school. Neglects and errors in education cannot and should not be charged to the school alone.

There are two distinct classes of demands, however, which the century makes upon the school. The one is, that the school shall be in harmony with the practical aims and with the spirit of the times; and the other, that it shall help to guard those interests which are as old as the human race itself, namely, the ethical interests which alone constitute—*make or render* man a *civilized* being, and make uprightness and charity part of his nature. The demands of the century on the school are then, first, of a practical, and second of an ethical character.

If the practical demand is that the school should accord with the spirit of the century, it becomes necessary to inquire what the spirit of the century is, so that we know according to what standard the school should shape its course.

Every age has its own features which appear strongly marked in its history, art, science, religion, politics, and society; and, as the features of a human being change and are ennobled in the course of a thoughtful life, so the features and the aspect of the times change with each newly discovered truth, with each world-historical deed. The eternal fountain out of which the deeds and thoughts of a nation arise wells up forever. The poet says, "Ever over the path of mankind flashes, like lightning, eternal truth." And thus the features of the time are subject to perpetual changes.

May we then be allowed to draw, with a few lines, an image of the times, as they appear to us, without ignoring the truth that the times are not always as they appear to the painter; remembering, however, that much of the portrait depends on the artist who draws it. The one may paint his century with the brush of Tintoretto, with bright lights and deep shadows, while the other may portray his century in a picture after

Rembrandt's fashion; the head and brow radiant with light, but the heart covered with black shadow and gloom.

In the beginning of the last century American life was still knit together with the life of England; and the history of Europe was that of America, and therefore in considering European history for a moment we consider what was then American history as well.

In the latter half of the last century, mankind seemed to rise and to shake off the fetters of mediævalism, which still clung to its limbs and held it in a state of social and political bondage. The dormant energy of the race awoke; an era of new activity sprang suddenly into existence. In politics, in science, in art, a new epoch began. It was a revival which was perhaps more transitory, but certainly not less important than the great revival of the 14th and 15th centuries. As in the earlier revival of *learning*, when art broke with the conventional and byzantine models, it seized again upon the classical art-forms of antiquity, so, in the revival of liberty, the last century resuscitated the political forms of antiquity, the idea of the Republic was revived, and into this old form the century poured its new life.

Yorktown, 100 years ago, ended forever the dream of a monarchy in America, and the success of the new state in its struggle reanimated the ideas of liberty in the old world. New America and New France arose. Fresh light shone forth from the fields of science and art. As on one side were the political, so on the other, were the scientific systems remodelled and re-created. The French revolution brought about a new order of society, French science produced a new classification of the kingdoms of nature, French legislation gave us the only thoroughly modern code of laws, French commerce adopted a new division of weights and measures. All this manifests the strong revolutionary character of the period. In the department of letters the same strong pulsation was felt, and the heart of the world throbbed again with a great period of literary and intellectual life. The great names of this movement tell its history. In philosophy, Condillac, Voltaire, D'Alembert, La Mettrie, Hume, Kant; in literature, Beaumarchais, Diderot, Marmontel, Montesquieu, Rousseau; in science, Buffon, Daubenton Brisson, Geoffroy St. Hilaire, Cuvier, Jussieu, Biot, Saussure, Watt, Franklin, Jenner.

It is hardly necessary to say, that this revival of the scientific and literary spirit was not confined to France alone. The Italian Canova, for instance, the Dane Thorwaldsen, the greatest sculptors of modern times, Goethe and Schiller, the great poets of Germany, belong to the same period. This time of almost feverish activity in science and politics was followed by decades of complete prostration caused by the fearful wars of the Napoleonic episode. A period of languid reaction in all the fields of intellectual work ensued. England, after 1815, rested exhausted and almost broken from its gigantic but futile efforts against the American colonies, or the United States, and against France.

France, whose revolutionary arms had over-run all Europe, had fallen into the hands of a soldier of genius, whom the combination of all the powers of Europe had dethroned and chained to the rocks of St. Helena. And now began throughout Europe a time of political oppression. The

kings of the old world had called on their people, to drive out the French conquerors, but they soon became afraid of the spirit they had conjured up. They suppressed every manifestation of popular political activity. The press was shorn of its rights and deprived of its remaining freedom. All Europe was exhausted and rested languidly. The era of progress, so suddenly begun, found as sudden an end in a period of political decay which extended through the first half of the nineteenth century. The hope of humanity had fled across the Atlantic. America had separated her fate from that of the older countries, and was the only oasis of freedom in a universal desert of tyranny. While Europe had broken with the free political traditions of the eighteenth century, and was uprooting them with merciless fury, they were cherished and put into practice in America. The history of the United States forms a quiet contrast to this, in the growth of the noblest ideas which the revival of liberty had brought forth in Europe.

Literature gave evidence of this sudden downfall. The struggle against the existing order of things in society and law, was vividly depicted in the productions of the leading writers of this period. Highwaymen and corsairs became ideal types in fiction and prose. Byron in England, Alfred de Musset in France, Heine and Lenau in Germany, and perhaps Wordsworth, whose poetry turned away from man and society and glorified nature, were the representative names of the literature of this period of political sloth, inactivity, and stagnation. A kind of apathy had taken possession of the European mind, and the literature of this period has not unaptly been called the literature of world-despair. The more active elements of the European races turned their back to the land of brutal oppression and found homes in the valleys and prairies of the great republic. The era of indifference gave rise even to a new school of philosophy. Kant's school, represented after his death by Hamilton, Comte and others—which had arrived at the conclusion that there could not be much certainty about external things any way,—and the Hegelian school with its encouraging optimism was followed by the dreary school of Schopenhauer who saw in death and rest the only true happiness of man. The political atmosphere was stifling; the governments were leagued against their peoples. But, what was invulnerable to attack was not safe against aspersion. Satire and scepticism, Punch and Thackeray, took their place in the literature of the day and in the art of the period. Inactivity became a political doctrine. A kind of ethical materialism arises in refined society which seeks to ameliorate the emptiness of existence by sensuous enjoyment.

While this was the drift of the surface-culture, a fresh under-current gradually but steadily welled up from the deepest heart of the people, and a wonderful wave from economic and social springs led to a regeneration of public life. Creative power, of which governments seemed devoid, still lived in the sinews and marrow of our civilization, and it burst forth through the channel of the industrial activities and invigorated afresh the old world. Practical life lightly blew away the cobwebs of the literature and metaphysics of quietism. The era of indifference came to a sudden end, when a new revolution, like an electric shock,

passed over the world in 1848. Thirty years of political commotion followed, during which great nations like Italy and Germany sprang into existence, and the noble new republic of France was established in the midst of unspeakable difficulties. During all this time the star of our republic had risen higher in the western skies, and growing in splendor until it outshone all other constellations, dazzled the eyes of the world. A people had risen out of nothing to rank as the first nation of the earth The depression of the old empires served only to raise the new empire higher. The miseries of Europe were the prosperity of America. Each act of oppression, each new revolution choked in blood had thrown myraids of strong men and women on the shores of the republic. This period of decomposition and destruction of the old world, was an unceasingly creative era for the United States. Here a continuous, peaceful growth had matured the political ideas which the last century had taught, and on whose destruction and up-rooting the European governments had wasted their energies. Here, out of separated colonies a confederation of states arose. It was the era of a *more* perfect union which culminated in the creation of the United States. A process of unification had begun, and its first stage went on through sixty years of the nineteenth century, during which time, in the fermentation of political agitation, the disintegrating questions arose to the surface, ready to be taken off. Up to the time of the civil war, the nation was still divided by the incompatible systems of slave labor and competitive work, and by an hon est diversity of opinion in regard to constitutional provisions. But these distinctions having been removed by the results of the war, an arbitration honestly and conclusively accepted by all sections of our country, a new era has now commenced, and we may say it boldly,—although the feeling of the sore may remain for a while after the wound has fully been healed,—that the era of the past twenty years has put in place of what the Constitution calls a *more* perfect union of the states, the *most* perfect union of South and North, a union which will last forever because it is now based on a community of interests. The past history of America, more wonderful than a fairy tale, is but "an earnest of what shall be." We stand just at the beginning of the most brilliant part of the new century, and already we see the process of unification going on and completing itself in a thousand ways. What a wonderful history was ours, even while the land was divided in itself! What untold possibilities are there in the future now when South and North have the same hope, the same aspiration, and mingle their energy in one mighty current!

Before the beginning of this era, of which twenty years have elapsed, one might have drawn a line across the continent and said: "Here ends the community of interests; here is the North and there is the South; here is agriculture and there is manufacture and commerce; here is black, there is white labor; here are emigrants, there are slaves; here is public, there is private education." But twenty years of the era of complete unification have passed and where is this line of demarkation now? It has vanished in the quick process which now is forming the most perfect union of all times. Already it is impossible to designate the South as an

exclusive agricultural and the North as the exclusive manufacturing division. Look about you in this great city of Georgia. Look at the magnificent homes of the citizens that have risen out of the ruin and desolation of war; look at the stores filled with the treasures of Southern workmanship, and at the factories in their restless labor, at the streets crowded with the vehicles of commerce, and you will see that the South has taken hold of the problems of the new Era. North or South, it is the same people, the same characteristic energy.

Already it is impossible to draw the line between North and South and to say: public schools here, private schools there. Much remains to be done yet, but, on the other hand there is no feature of the last twenty years that calls for more sincere admiration than the noble work done by the South to educate her people, both white and black.

The political features in the history of the century, great as they are, brilliant as they appear, are after all, only details. The spirit and essence of our century lies not in the great political actions of the age, not in the pomp and splendor of war, but finds its motive powers and levers rather in the quiet shop of the artisan, in the busy counting-room of the merchant, and in the retired laboratories of science. By the invention and perfection of machines the labor of the artisan and mechanic has lost its old form. The production of and manufacture of articles for the needs of human society, has experienced almost infinite expansion. The constant coöperation of many hands necessitated by the new form of production, and on the other hand the desire to facilitate the exchange of the multitude of products, has led, with other causes, to the incomparably rapid growth of cities in Europe and America, and new problems for legislation and education have been created by city life.

Production on a vast scale requires also extensive means of transportation, and therefore the development of the latter keeps pace with the steadily increasing growth of factory work. The new means of transportation stand in the closest connection with the growth of manufacture, for without the machine labor of our century and its mass of productions, without the involved necessity of instant and extensive distribution of the manufactured articles, neither railroad nor telegraph could exist. The limit of the development of the one is the limit of the growth of the other. Our century has printing presses which can print, cut, fold, and fasten 30,000 sheets per hour, and the invention is capable of further development, but the true limit lies in the demand, in the number of readers or subscribers. It is useless to manufacture articles by the million which are demanded by the hundred only. This mass production which is characteristic of our century presupposes vastly increased consumption. The existence of countless factories and machines is in itself a proof of the fact of increased consumption. The enormously increased rate of production is intelligible only on the presupposition that each individual human being enjoys a greater share of those things which make life pleasant. If it is true that the possibility of civilization depends on a certain amount of luxury, and that no nation can make any progress in the former unless its labor has procured for it wealth and luxury, it follows that in a period like ours, where the individual com-

mands more wealth, greater comfort, civilization and refinement can spread more widely and become the attributes of the masses of the people instead of remaining the privilege of the few. Of these characteristics of the century the school must take cognizance. In the past period of individualized labor each mechanic worked for himself, independent of all his fellow-workmen. The article made in the shop received its whole form, from the raw material to its finished state through the same hand. For this reason each workman had to be trained so as to master the whole process;—the mode of production which *our* century has invented demands extreme division of labor. A piece of work passes through many hands before it is completed. The individual worker no longer needs the knowledge of the whole process, but skill in a small part only of the process. It has become easier to learn a trade than it was formerly, but, for the same reason, the workman is less sure of retaining his position. In this complex system of divided labor each individual becomes dependent on the other, and individual independence in work has disappeared.

The new mode of production gives to labor the character of restlessness. The individual must do his work quickly and hand it over to the waiting hands of his fellow-workman, or the movement of the whole chain will be interrupted. The golden, comfortable easy time of the artisan of the past era, the pleasant, slow rythm of rest and work has disappeared, driven away by the whir of spindle and spool. Rip Van Winkle would wait in vain to-day for master tailor and master shoemaker to accompany him to the linden tree before the inn for their Monday-morning potion. The romance of rest with intervals of work, the romance of easy individual labor belongs to the past. In our century each man must labor as one of the grand army of workers, and obey the commands of his calling at all times, at all hours. If he wants to work at all, he must move in the strictly circumscribed course, and with the regularity and precision of a wheel in a never-resting, huge machine.

The feverish, restless motion which machine labor requires has exerted an influence on the mind which extends beyond the province of manufacture and commerce. It has marked the whole age with its characteristics, so that all the callings of peace and war bear the stamp of highest strain and energetic haste. The other characteristic of the century, namely, the rapidity and far-reaching impetus of the means of transit, has perhaps contributed still more than the changed forms of labor, to give to our century the peculiar characteristics of which we have spoken. For railroads and steamships and telegraph and postal facilities do not serve for the distribution of material wealth merely, they also communicate and distribute intellectual treasures and spread and scatter human sympathy and thought all over the world. The peaceful victories and conquests of mankind in trade and commerce, the inventions of genius, the wisdom and folly of political experiments are daily communicated by telegraph and press to all the cultured people of the earth. They also serve the ends of universal justice: the wicked tremble when they hear of crime denounced and punished; when they hear of the vindicated majesty of the law;—and noble hearts beat higher when they see that

humanity, without distinction of language or race, defends and admires what is good and just. The sufferings of a nation, of a country find a thousand tongues and a responsive echo in the help of distant lands.

Travelling and the facilitated communication by letter, the press, the telegraph educate man's political sense by teaching him the political methods of other states. Nations become acquainted with each other, and discover qualities and interests which they possess in common. The existence of the American republic is a constant lesson and invitation to the nations of the earth, and France has profited by it in our own time. In no former age has the cause of self-government experienced such an advance as in our day.

Our century has given to liberty a new foundation. On the basis of economic interests modern civil freedom has arisen and become strong.

As a subordinate result of the perfection of the means of communication, it deserves to be mentioned that the stable or localized character of the civilization of former centuries has suffered considerable change. Nations intermingle, they see and know more of each other than formerly. To these characteristics of our century, our own country owes much of its wonderful growth. An event unheard of in all history begins and continues through the century, inaugurated by the leveling, equalizing tendencies of the 18th century. From all the parts of Europe a mighty stream of all races and tongues issues forth and pours its waves into the prairies and valleys of the new continent, and with marvelous rapidity they form a new nation, with sharply defined national characteristics; a nation welded together so indissolubly by the cohesive forces of free institutions, that even a terrible civil war cannot sever it. In former ages a small fraction of mankind was called the floating population. To-day the name may be given in a certain sense to almost the whole world. The individual no longer knows with absolute certainty that he will finish his days in this or that town. Not many persons to-day will resemble KANT, the philosopher, in this respect, who never in his life went twenty miles beyond the limits of the little city in which he was born.

I have attempted, as far as the narrow limits of my ability and the allotted space of time would allow, to draw a picture of the century in which we live. We cannot withdraw from its influence. Goethe says:—"As if driven by invisible spirits, the sun-horses of the times run away with the light vehicle of our individual fate; and nothing remains for us but to grasp the reins with undaunted energy and, guiding to the right and to the left, to turn the wheels from rocks and precipice. Whither we go—who knows? Why, we hardly know whence we came."

It remains for us to consider how the school may be made servicable to the spirit of the century. The demands of the present period are not to be taken as substitutes for the ethical and generally human aims of the school of all times, but rather as their complement. The latter must not be contradicted by the former, for the ethical aims are of imperishable and everlasting value. The education of the child to truth, virtue, humanity, to charity, and manly strength, aspires to aims as eternal and immutable as the stars above. But to these ethical aims the demands of

the century are added. They are not new, but the old demands have become more pointed, more intense, and the tasks have been raised to a higher power.

Our age is an age of effort, work, and labor. The activity of the school is therefore directed towards a double task. The imparting of knowledge, and the formation of a habit of unremitting, steady industry. No principle needs more thorough inculcation than that: "I will do what I ought to do." Harmony between duty and will is the basis of moral culture and of individual happiness. Not only skill in his work, but love for labor and activity should be the gift of the school to the young being when he enters upon his path in life, if he is to find there satisfaction and happiness. In former epochs the aim of the civil education of the mechanic or artisan in his craft was the adaptation to and training for a special trade or calling, and the method was to lead him to isolated, independent work. The culture of our century demands work with others. Its principle is no longer *independence*, but interdependence. In the place of the knowledge of the whole process, the condition for excellence now is the utmost manual skill and dexterity in the detail. Formerly man completed the work and the tool was his assistant, now the machine performs the task and man helps it. Formerly his knowledge of the craft afforded to the workman protection against being pushed out of his place; now, in some trades the process can be learned by a tyro in a few weeks or days. Not unfrequently trades disappear altogether when a new machine has made them superfluous. Formerly the country boy might be trained exclusively for country life and the city boy for the city. Now, no certainty of future occupation can be inferred from present position.

These conditions the new school must consider. When the special trade no longer affords any security of continuous employment, a more comprehensive and more thorough schooling can impart to the boy greater powers of adaptation, and open to him a wider field. Machine labor has never lessened the value of intelligence and of steady character. For the very reason that the mechanical, spiritless work is done by fettered nature herself, the intelligent human power is enhanced in value. With every new machine, intelligent directive power becomes more indispensable, since by bungling or stupid labor the danger is multiplied to immense loss. The further the abilities of man are developed, the greater is the field in which he can choose a vocation. How many fields of labor, to mention a single illustration, are opened to the boy by a knowledge of a single study, that of drawing, which without such knowledge would remain closed to him.

School education, then, which does not merely educate the memory, but also the senses and the hand, increases the adaptability to the more stringent conditions of existence. Not so much the mass and quantity of things known form the test of a good school, as the strength and skill of hand and eye, of judgment and will. The things taught are means, not ends.

The century demands that the school should work for life. The changes made in the most progressive school-systems, as for instance the

introduction of drawing, of the manual training of the kindergarten and its cultivation of the senses, all these innovations give evidence of the responsive tendency of the school and of the teaching profession to do justice to reasonable demands. It is both unwise and unjust in criticising the schools to dwell exclusively on what ought to be done, and to ignore the great things already accomplished. Enough, it is true, remains to be done by school and teacher, and may the day never come when professional self-sufficiency thinks that our schools cannot be perfected. But the fact that there are things that have not been accomplished by the school is rather a basis for hope than for criticism.

"Labor with what zeal we will,
Something still remains undone,
Something uncompleted still,
Waits the rising of the sun."

Widened and extensive intelligence,—narrow and intensive activity, contact and sympathy with universal interests,—and devotion to the special vocation are the peculiar conditions of our century's life. The former teach man to find his place in life, the latter how to fill it. The school is carried along by this current. That flaunting wisdom which knows a little of everything and nothing well is worthless—"of all things a little, but one thing well" is a much better principle. The school must refuse to teach more than can be taught well. But, since the whole field of science cannot be grasped even in its elements, it remains the task of the school to fix its attention on those things which may be well learned by the child. The former mountebank-systems of teaching, which shouted in street and market how many things they could teach and which spread over everything, were shallow in all things. The principle of school education is depth and thoroughness in a few things, and then if there is time, general knowledge. Man may study a multitude of things, but one thing and if it were the smallest, he should know well. In regard to the selection of the subjects the decision rests on the question what is most important for the life of the day and for the life of humanity. In one thing that is thoroughly grasped, the mind seizes the whole world. "That teacher" says Goethe, "who understands how to present a single noble deed, a single good poem, so as to rouse the child's feeling performs more than one who teaches a whole series of lower forms of nature by shape and name; for the whole result is what we may know without all this trouble; namely, that man bears in himself more perfectly and more uniquely than all other beings, the image of God. The individual may be at liberty to busy himself with what attracts him, what he delights in, or what he considers useful, but the proper study of humanity is man."

The school should be of service to the nation also. Without intermission, year after year multitudes of emigrants arrive at our shores. The parents speak a hundred tongues, the child soon speaks but one, the language of his country. To each child the school gives a new tongue, to each home it sends a youthful interpreter of American life and institutions. The school is building up the nation. The child that has gone through a public school is an American, no matter where he first saw the

light of the sun. Thus language, in all its forms, becomes the most important study of the school. It contains the key to all things, human and divine.

There is another demand of the nation on the school. Lessons of history should be taught and taught not simply as chronological curiosities, but as truths appealing to thought and to rouse and train patriotic feelings in the young mind.

Since the school is to prepare for life, both subject-matter and method of instruction should be living and real. The printed page is and ever will be a great medium for the conveying of information, but it is not the only medium. Besides mastering the printed page, the child should learn how to derive information from the greatest of all sources of information, greater even than books, namely, the world without and the mind within. Words remain empty caskets if left without a knowledge of things, which the child may gain by using his senses and by cultivating his power of observation. Things then should be studied, as far as the nature of the subject allows, and not merely their weak reflection in books. Without sense-training and the knowledge of things, words have but a dream-like existence. The school must not be merely a reading-room or recitation room, but must present, both in its selection of lessons and its apparatus a piece of reality and life.

In regard to methods of teaching, our century has firmly established the principle of self-activity and industry. The pupil cannot be independent, he is a child and needs guidance. He cannot be allowed to have his own way always. Nothing is more apt to weaken the child than the favorite maxim, to let the child alone, to let him do what he pleases. He must struggle for freedom from his own whims and caprices. He must learn to do what he should do. On the other hand, the boy must become independent intellectually, and, for this reason, he must learn to *find* knowledge in the objective world by his own eyes. Knowledge must be conquered, in order to be wholly possessed. The teacher may guard the pupil against hurtful errors, he may point out to him the road to knowledge, he may lead him, but he must not attempt to carry him. Without the charm of self-activity, even the new toy ceases to be of interest to the child. In the process of learning, therefore, the mind of the pupil should not be in the attitude of receiving, but rather in that of grasping knowledge. Schopenhauer says bluntly, but truly: "Truth that is received merely and committed to memory, sticks to man's organization like an artificial limb, a false tooth, a wax nose. . . . But knowledge gained by one's own thinking resembles the natural limb; it alone belongs to us fully."

The century has a democratic, equalizing, and harmonizing tendency, and the school partakes of it. The increase in the facilities of inter-communication gradually effaces the external differences between nations, and dulls the sense of the individual in regard to these distinctions. Here again the school is guided by the spirit of the century. No caste, no social barriers which separate man from man are recognized in the school. The school unites in its precincts the children of the rich and of the poor, of all classes of society, of all nationalities and of all creeds;

all receive the same education. Education has become the temple of the nation; all believe in it, all are united in its support; in its walls dwells the whole future generation. Everywhere the tendency becomes apparent, to efface unreal distinctions, and to make the individual the image of the noblest features of humanity. The school has become the most universal of all human institutions. In all of them there are divisions, in it there is none. Education embraces with the same love, Jew and Gentile, for it sees the type of humanity in each child.

We have touched rapidly upon many a question which seemed worthy of a more thorough and detailed examination; and others have slipped altogether through the wide meshes of this lecture. But let us, in conclusion, devote a moment to that side of education which no age can transform, and no century can alter; to that side of education which does not prepare for the macrocosm of life without, but which seeks to build up a world within; that schooling which educates man not for others, but for himself, and which teaches him to find happiness in himself and in his deeds. Religion is taught by church and pulpit, but the school cannot remain idle in the work of ethical education.

The school, it has been said, should educate for life. Man's life, however, glitters in double colors. He lives a life within and a life without. His eye sees the sun of the world, but deep in his heart rise the stars of his own fate. The struggle for existence which life brings with it, is not always a physical struggle; it may be a strife for spiritual treasures, for unsullied name and untarnished honor, for ethical existence.

The deepest soul of man must become the anchoring ground of the truth that man's higher nature must not be allowed to suffer in the struggle and in the race for gain. Higher than the treasures of the world he must learn to esteem justice and truth; higher than worldly gain the love of home and kindred, of neighbor and friend, and faith and fidelity to the State.

These teachings school and family must foster, and engrave them in the soul of the child so that they sink deep into the innermost nature of the man. The life of man is a struggle for better days towards which hope beckons with a smile. All hunt for treasures, which few only find. Unmixed happiness is a rare guest in the house of man, but disappointment and care come like the days of the year. We cannot escape the sorrows of life, for we carry them with us.

> "Behind the rider sitteth dark-faced care,
> And with the sailor sails she through the waves."

If thus life mingles light and shadow, if happiness cannot be found in market and street, education must teach the child to find content and happiness where alone they will not flee:—in his own heart. A hand ready to help, a contented mind, an appreciation of those treasures that are higher than life itself, this is the ethical task which the century demands from the school.

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